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The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. XXVIII. DECEMBER, 1919 No. 7

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY, EXCEPT AUGUST: 50 cents a year.
Single copy, 5 cents.

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second class mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

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IMMANUEL.

Ring, sweet bells of Christendom,
Everywhere the tidings tell
How the Lord to earth did come,—
Ring and tell!

Empty-handed from His birth,
Gifts exceeding price He brought;
Treasures hidden not in earth
Jesus brought.

To the blind, unclouded sight;
To the dumb, the voice of praise;
And to all in darkness, light,—
Joy and praise.

To the poor, the gospel's wealth;
To the rich, the spirit poor;
And to all, His saving health,
Rich and poor.

To the heavy-laden, rest;
To the mourner, words of life;
And to all, the last and best,
Endless life.

In the perfect path He trod
Still His footprints mark the way;
Out to men and up to God
Show the way,—
Out to men in love that breaks
Bread of charity with all,
And—thrice blessed then!—forsakes
Self for all;

Up to God in deeds like prayers,
In obedience to Him;
And, in faith, love's altar stairs
Reared to Him.

Ring, sweet bells of Christendom!
Far and near the tidings tell
How the Lord to earth did come,—
Ring and tell!

Join, good Christians, east and west,
In Immanuel's endless praise,
And with deeds of mercy best
Show His praise!

Still the Christmas angels sing,
"Glory be to God most high!"
The eternal echoes ring,
"God most high!"

Lift your songs in unison:
"Peace on earth, good-will to men!"
Mingle song and life in one
Wide "Amen!"

—*Harriet McEwen Kimball.*

THE BEAUTY OF CHRIST.

Thine eyes shall behold the King in his beauty.—ISA. xxxiii. 17.

Among all the artists who have represented Christ's life one stands alone for his unique, unconventional treatment of it. Others have represented Him in the common humanities of His life, but they have lacked the power to give with equal grandeur the awful moments in which His mission was concentrated. Others have represented Him ideally, and with sublimity, but they have not been able to touch such subjects as the supper at Cana without either making it too ideal or too vulgar. One man alone has mingled the heavenly with the earthly, the divine

with the human, the common with the wonderful, the poetical with the prose of daily life, in his representation of the human existence of Christ. That man was Tintoret. In his "Last Supper" it is a common room in which the Apostles and their Master meet. Servants hurry to and fro; the evening has fallen dark and the lamps are lit; those who eat the meal are really fishermen and unlearned men; it was just such a meal as was eaten that night by every one else in Jerusalem. We are in the midst of common human life.

But the upper air of the chamber is filled with a drift of cherubim, and the haze of the lamplight takes that azure tint with which that artist afterwards filled the recesses of the "Paradise"; the whole soft radiance of the light falls on and envelops the upright figure of Christ, worn and beautiful, bending to offer to one of His disciples the broken bread.

It is common, human life filled with the Divine.

I speak now of the beauty of Christ's character. One element was His sensibility,—a word that I prefer to "sensitiveness," because it includes sensitiveness. Sensitiveness is the power of receiving impressions, whether from nature or man, vividly, intensely, and yet delicately. Sensibility is this passive quality, with activity of soul in addition, exercised upon the impressions received. The more perfect the manhood, the more perfect is this sensibility. The possession of it in a high degree is the chief source of beauty of character as distinguished from greatness of character, and yet without it no character can reach the highest greatness.

It does not seem wrong to say that there was in Him the sensibility to natural beauty. When He was wearied, He called to the disciples to go away into a "desert" place to rest awhile. When Jerusalem was loud in His ears, He ofttimes resorted to Gethsemane. When He desired to pray, He went alone to the hills; when He taught, it was by preference by the waves of Galilee, or walking through the cornfields on the Sabbath, or on the summit of some grassy hill. We know that He had watched the lilies, arrayed more gloriously than Solomon; that He had marked the reed shaken in the wind, and the tender green of the first shoot of the figtree. We find his common teaching employed about the vineyard and the wandering sheep and the summer rain. These would not have been so often connected with His action and so ready on His lips, had He not loved them well.

But still higher in Him was that intense sensibility to human feeling, which made Him by instinct know, without the necessity of speech, the feelings of those He met.

This is the highest touch of beauty in a character. What is it which most charms us in a friend? It is that he can read the transient expression on our face and the feeling we are ourselves but half-conscious of possessing; it is that he never mistakes, but sees us true when all the world is wrong about us.

Such a friend has not only power over character, but beauty of character. He is that man who, from sensibility to the feelings of others, knows how to develop in the noblest way each personality whose mediating charity and sympathy bring into musical accord the several characters of their society, till, all having been lured to do what each can do best, they learn to work happily and live happily together.

Christ saw Nathanael in the early days coming to Him from the garden and the fig-tree; He looked upon the simple and earnest face, and recognized the long effort of the man to be true. He frankly granted the meed of praise: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." A few words more, in which Christ went home to the secret trials of the man, and Nathanael was His forever.

He met Peter in the morning light, and seeing through all the surface impetuosity of his character, deep into the strength of his nature, called him Cephas, the man-of-rock, on whose powerful character the infant Church should be built. And Peter, catching inspiration from the word, saw a new life opening before him, and began to believe in his own power.

When the malefactor on the cross appealed to Him, Christ saw at once that the fountain of a noble life had begun to flow. Without an instant's hesitation, He claimed its waters for Paradise. When the persistency of Thomas refused to believe without a sign, Christ penetrated to the inner honesty which prompted the scepticism and vouchsafed a reply of love it struck home, and the Apostle's heart was broken into adoration.

The sensibility of Christ to human feel

ing was at once translated into action. It is in all our remembrance how His tenderness stayed upon the wayside to satisfy the mother's heart and to bless the children; how His compassion felt in itself the weariness of the multitude and gave it rest and food. We remember how swift was the love which, touched by the widow's weeping, stopped the bier and restored the son to the mother's arms; how strange that passion of tears at the grave of Lazarus, even at the moment when He was about to give back the lost; how discriminating the sympathy which gave to Martha and to Mary their several meed of praise; how unspeakable in beauty that translation into words of the sorrow of the mother and the Apostle, which He felt within Himself, and to both phases of which He spoke distinctively: "Woman, behold thy son!" "Friend, behold thy Mother!" All was felt which human feeling felt, and all was sympathized with actively, till at last, upon the cross, all the sorrows of the world were taken into Himself. It is there, when intense sensibility to the want and woe and sin of men had led Him to absolute self-sacrifice, there in that bowed head and that broken Manhood, that we realize at last, in the radiance of love which eye hath not seen, the King in His perfect beauty.

The qualities of beautiful poetry are also the qualities of beautiful character. Take the first,—*simplicity*. It is not of the simplicity of Christ's teaching that I speak now, but of the quality in His character which corresponds to what we call "simplicity" in poetry. That which is "simplicity" in art is *purity* in a perfect character. Now the beauty of Christ's purity was first in this, that those who saw it saw in it the glory of moral victory.

We talk about the beauty of innocence in a child; that was not the beauty of Christ's purity. Exquisite as it is, we know that it is fleeting. Some speak of the spiritual beauty which belongs to the untempted life of one who has never known the world; neither was that the beauty of Christ's purity. The purity of Christ had been subject to the storm; had known evil and overcome it; had passed through the dusty ways of men and received no speck on its white robes. A tempest of trial had only driven it, like the snow on alpine summits, into more dazzling spotlessness. It was beautiful with its own beauty. It was still more beautiful in that it stirred in men the sensation of moral power.

And from this purity, so tried and so victorious, arose two other elements of moral beauty,—perfect justice and perfect mercy. Innocence cannot be just. Nor is the untempted saint fit to judge. He does not know the force of temptation; he can make no allowances. But Christ is able to be just and yet merciful, because He is entirely pure. Having known evil and subdued it, He judges from perfect knowledge. He suffered, being tempted; therefore He is merciful, knowing the force of temptation. He met and realized in battle the principles of evil, therefore His justice is stern and unrelenting when He sees these principles ruling the lives of men. So it was that he had no words of pity for the hypocrite, the root of whose life was falsehood; the only thing which could save the Pharisee was unrelenting condemnation! So it was that He had mercy on the publican, whose heart He saw to be broken with penitence.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,—not only God as He is in His perfect Being, but also God in man. It was this power that Christ possessed as the result of purity. Wherever there was a shred of good, a spark of the Divine in the sinful, Christ saw it. He discovered it and drew it forth as a magnet would draw from a heap of chaff one needle-point of steel. There is no loveliness in a character greater than this, and it stamps the whole of the Saviour's life.

Another element of great poetry is *passion*, the power of intense feeling, capable of perfect expression.

It was intense feeling of the weakness and sin of man, and intense joy in the Father's power to redeem, that produced the story of the Prodigal Son, where every word is on fire with tender passion. See how it comes home even now! See how its profound humility has made it universal!

"Come unto Me, all ye who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." How that goes home to the deepest want of the race!

And if you seek for the silent passion of action, we find it in many forms in His life,—from the driven flight into the Wilderness to the transfigured form upon the side of Hermon; from the moment when He stood on the great stairs of the Temple, crying "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink," to the hour when

He wept over the guilt and ruin of the nation; from the awfulness of the supreme agony in the Garden to the last cry of triumph for a world redeemed. In all it was passion in its noblest forms, and in the intensest expression. It is a beauty of character which assumes the diadem of sublimity.

Lastly, energy is not noble energy, unless it be capable of profound calm. I will even go further and say that all noble moral energy roots itself in moral calm. Restlessness is ugly, having no goal, being full of vain effort. Activity in repose, calm in the heart of passion,—these are the essence of beauty. And in Him in whom we have found the King in His beauty this peacefulness was profound. His activity grew out of deep quietude of trust in the Father's will. His was the calm of One to whom duty was all; to finish the work given Him to do; to live or to die un-alarmed and un-impatient,—for His life and death were hidden in the stillness of God's will. This is the final touch of beauty, which gathers into itself, and harmonizes all the others; hence no words are so beautiful as those in which, having perfect rest Himself, He bestows it on men: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." All moral loveliness, and all spiritual, lie in knowing what He meant when He said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."—*Stopford A. Brooke.*

As there are two questions which we can ask about God,—the one, What will God do for us? the other, What can we do for God?—so there are two questions which we can ask about man,—the one, What can man do for us? the other, What can we do for man? What will the world give to me? or What can I give to the world? It is plain enough which is the nobler and higher attitude towards God and man. And in the conduct of life, if we would grow richer every day we live, if we would have our way brighten and become more blessed to the end, our question, first, last, and every time, must be not *What can I get*, but *What can I give;* not *How can I be ministered unto* (as they who reach forth eager hands), but *How can I minister* (as they who have a mind to do some useful work).—*Rufus Ellis.*

THE STILL HOUR.

A CHRISTMAS OFFERING.

We come not with a costly store,
O Lord, like them of old,
The masters of the starry lore,
From Ophir's shore of gold;
No weepings of the incense-tree
Are with the gifts we bring;
No odorous myrrh of Araby
Blends with our offering.

But still our love would bring its best,—
A spirit keenly tried
By fierce affliction's fiery test,
And seven times purified;
The fragrant graces of the mind,
The virtues that delight
To give their perfume out, will find
Acceptance in Thy sight.

—*William Croswell.*

Grant unto us, we pray Thee, O Lord our God, that we who rejoice to keep the feast of the nativity of Jesus Christ Thy Son, may by walking worthily of Him attain to fellowship with Him, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The shepherds sing, and shall I silent be?
My God, no hymn for Thee?
My soul's a shepherd too; a flock it feeds
Of thoughts and words and deeds.
The pasture is Thy Word, the streams Thy Grace,
Enriching all the place.
Shepherd and flock shall sing, and all my powers
Out-sing the daylight hours.

—*George Herbert.*

Do not be fond of criticising others, and do not resent their criticisms of you. Everything has two handles,—one by which it may be borne, the other by which it cannot. If your brother be unjust, do not take up the matter by that handle,—the handle of his injustice,—for that handle is the one by which it cannot be taken up; but rather by the handle that he is your brother and brought up with you; and then you will be taking it up as it can be borne.—*Epictetus.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.; tel. Quincy 1140.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

NOTICE.

Please take notice that all letters for the Book Club *must be written in ink and on one side only of the paper.*

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Please notice Mrs. Starbird's new address.

OFFERS.

The following books are offered by Cheerful Letter Committee of Chestnut Hill Branch Alliance. Apply to Mrs. George D. Burrage, 70 Circuit Road, Chestnut Hill, Mass. "The Silver Chord"; Bunyan's "Holy War"; two Old Testaments; one New Testament; one Webster's Dictionary; one large Bible (1861); Complete Works of William Ellery Channing (1884).

Large Bibles, suitable for use in church or Sunday-school, are offered to any one paying charges. Apply to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

The Leominster Branch Alliance offers the following books. Apply to Mrs. Robert L. Carter, 24 Dartmouth Street, Leominster, Mass. Family or Pulpit Bible; Shakespeare's Works; Alexander Pope's Works; Coleridge's Works; Mrs. Hemans's Poems; "Farm Ballads," Will Carleton; "Right and Wrong," Spencer; "The Golden Silence," C. N. and A. M. Williamson; "The Light that Failed," Kipling.

The Springfield Committee offers the following. Apply to Mrs. William E. Hodge, 27 Biltmore Street, Springfield, Mass. "Tales from Shakespeare," Lamb; "Queen Mary" (a drama), Tennyson; "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush," Maclaren; "Dream Life," Ik Marvel; Poems, Tennyson; "Outre-Mer," Longfellow; *The Craftsman*, 1914; *Scribner's*, 1918; *Atlantic*, 1916–17–18.

The Brighton Branch offers the following. Address Miss C. L. Murdock, 320 Allston Street, Coolidge Corner P.O., Brighton, Mass. "The Vicar of Wakefield," Goldsmith; "Looking Backward—2000–1887," Bellamy; "The Christian," Hall Caine; "Henry Esmond," Thackeray; "The Fair God," Wallace; "Bonaventure," Cable; "Donovan"; "Sylvie"; "Captain Canot"; "L'Abbé Constantin," Halévy; "Robinson Crusoe," Daniel Defoe; "The Stories of My Four Friends," Jane Andrews; "From Canal Boy to President," Horatio Alger, Jr.; History of the United States, Scudder; "Things will take a Turn," Beatrice Harraden; "The Vagabonds," J. T. Trowbridge; "Oh, Why Should the Spirit of Mortal be Proud?" William Knox; "The Princess," "Ring Out, Wild Bells," Tennyson; "The Breaking Waves Dashed High," Felicia Hemans; "Abide with Me," Henry Francis Lyte; "He Giveth His Beloved Sleep," Elizabeth Barrett Browning; "City Ballads," Will Carleton; "How to Swim," Capt. Davis Dalton; "Cyrano de Bergerac," Rostand; "Splinters, Jokes, and Job Lots"; Gospel Hymns Nos. I., II., III.; Spiritual Hymns; old music, vocal and instrumental; New England Conservatory Piano Method; post-card album; *National Geographic Magazine*, 1918; *American Magazine*, six months 1916; *Home Needlework; Good Housekeeping*, 1918.

The Wellesley Hills Branch offers the following books. Address Mrs. L. K. Preston, 10 Appleby Road, Wellesley, Mass. "Credo"; "Ecce Homo," Seeley; "Plea for Amusements," F. W. Sawyer; "Notes on Nursing," Florence Nightingale; "The Highlands of Ethiopia," W. C. Harris, "How Not to be Sick," A. J. Bellows; "Regal Rome," Newman; "Man in Genesis and Geology," J. P. Thompson; "The Synthetic Philosophy of Expression," Brown; "Culture and Discipline of Mind" and "Philosophy of the Moral Feelings," J. Abercrombie; "Life and Letters of T. J. Mumford"; "Steps of Belief" and "Sermons," James Freeman Clarke; "Lectures on Art and Poetry," Washington Allston; "Writings of Theodore Parker"; "Birds of New England," Samuels; "Specimens of Table-talk," S. T. Coleridge; "Broken Lights; Concerning Religious Faith,"

F. P. Cobbe; "Domestic Economy," Catherine Beecher; Cicero's Orations (translation), C. D. Yonge; "Frederick, Crown Prince and Emperor," Rodd; "The Invisible Lodge," Jean Paul Richter; "Problems of Race Regeneration," Havelock Ellis; "Eschatology," Samuel Lee; "Sketch of Turgot"; "History of the Religion of Israel," Toy; "Translations from the Prose Works of Heine"; "Principles of Design in Architecture," Garbett; "Journal of Maurice de Guérin"; "Journal of a Resident on a Georgia Plantation," Frances Anne Kemble; Volapük Handbook; "Jesus and His Biographers," Furness; "The Human Intellect," Porter; "Poems and Essays," Jones Very; "Memorial of George Bradburn," by his wife; "Autobiography of Henry Clarke Wright"; "The Gentleman," G. H. Calvert; "Sermons," Robert Collyer; "Exiles of Florida," J. R. Giddings; "Memoirs of American Missionaries" (1833); "Life and Correspondence of Lord Jeffrey; "Autobiography of Edward Gibbon"; "Life of the Saviour," Henry Ware; "Memoirs of De Tocqueville" (Vol. I.), "History of Civilization in England" (Vol. II.), Buckle.

REQUESTS.

1. Miss Mabel C. Cortelyou, Marietta, Georgia, could use to great advantage in a lending library any volumes of Louisa Alcott's stories that are in good condition. A set once owned has been read so much as to be quite worn out.

2. After a long silence I am coming again with warmest greetings to all in the name of Him who said, "Lo, I am with you alway." Many sincere thanks to all who have so kindly remembered me during the past two years. I have not been able to write much. I have been incapacitated from the usual duties of life for seventeen years. My father died when I was a child, and my brother seven years ago, leaving mother and me alone and entirely dependent upon the kindness of friends. Mother is an invalid, too, very weak with heart trouble. Life is a problem, dear friends; but we trust our Heavenly Father. And words are inadequate to tell how grateful we are to the Cheerful Letter Exchange for many kindnesses. What a blessing the noble work is to the shut-ins! I suffer more during the winter months, and reading when I am able helps me to forget pain. I should be very grateful for books and will share my reading with others. I should also appreciate a dictionary. May God bless you all and give you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Miss Myrta Eshbaugh, Tionesta, Pennsylvania.

3. A Life of Charlotte Brontë is asked for by Mrs. James Newcomb, Suffolk, Virginia.

4. I have enjoyed *The Cheerful Letter* very much indeed and have loaned the books sent, all through the neighborhood, before otherwise disposing of them to shut-ins and country people in small, lonely villages,—to Catholics, Protestants, and unreligious people. All are grateful in their replies (a stamped addressed envelope is put inside a book), and neighbors and children of neighbors have enjoyed the books too. As my own health has been failing all summer, I have been ordered away for the winter. Please do not forget to change my address, as I expect to find other people glad of reading who cannot afford to buy it, and I can loan them the same as here. Address for the winter, Mrs. Percy B. Starbird, Box 42, Route 4, Salem, New Jersey.

5. I am now teaching in a small mountain town, and wish to thank the Cheerful Letter people for the literature that they have already sent me, and if it is not too much to ask for something more I should appreciate some Bible stories, fairy stories, and any others suitable for children in the fifth grade; also cards, pictures, and Christmas-tree ornaments. As I am interested in history and biography I desire copies of Eggleston's "Life in the Eighteenth Century," Martha Lamb's History of New York City, Oliver's or Henry Cabot Lodge's Life of Alexander Hamilton, and Todd's "Aaron Burr." I should like Longfellow's or Bryant's Poems; some *Geographic Magazines*, and other educational literature; also any good books or magazines the Cheerful Letter readers care to send. Miss Sue Hardie, Marion, Virginia.

6. I am a farmer woman living in one of the poorest sections of Piedmont, North Carolina. This community is destitute of reading. There is no free library within reach of us, and I crave good reading. I have six children with me, in-

cluding a grown son and daughter. We have no books, and we cannot buy them, as on our little farm we can barely eke out a living. I shall appreciate most keenly works of fiction, religious books, poetry, school books, histories, or magazines, and I trust that you dear Christian ladies of the North, out of your abundance, will remember me and mine. I shall pass on the good things you may send me. Mrs. Alice Phillips, R. D. 3, Bear Creek, North Carolina.

7. Mrs. Helen M. Warner, New Boston, New Hampshire, writes: "Years ago I owned nearly all of Mark Twain's published works, up to 1904, and they were burned that year along with more than a thousand other books and everything else we possessed. Do you think it would be possible for *The Cheerful Letter* to send me any of Mark Twain's earlier works, especially 'The Innocents Abroad' and 'A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court'?"

8. I wish to thank every one who has remembered me in any way to cheer my sad and lonely life of suffering back here among the mountains of North Carolina. I have received but very few books in a good while; but I knew every one was doing something for the boys in the army, and I was glad to have it so. I had one son in France, and three brothers; but all are home again except one dear brother, who is buried over there. I shall be very grateful for any good books or reading for myself and six children; or any books or papers on crochet work or tatting or knitting, as I do such work to sell when the rheumatism isn't so bad, but I can use my hands. I should especially like a good dictionary,—one with the words pronounced, if I can get it; and a Bible with large print for my mother; and I should like Longfellow's Poems. I shall be very glad to be remembered in any way through the long winter, and especially on Christmas, as my Cheerful Letter friends are the most I have to cheer me along. Mrs. Beulah Moore, Route 1, Box 62, Campbell, North Carolina.

9. I am a young girl, sixteen years old, and have five brothers and one sister, younger than myself. My father is in the hospital at Marion, Virginia; has been there about three months. My mother, little brothers, my grandmother, and myself had to finish making the crop. We are very poor, not able to buy good books to read, and should appreciate it very much if some one would send me some good books; also scraps for patchwork. My birthday will be the 15th of December. Won't some one please remember me on that day with a birthday card? For reference I give Rev. J. Lee Taylor, Spencer, Virginia. I am a member of the Missionary Baptist Church. Christine Rea, Spencer, Virginia.

10. I have come again asking for some school-books for a girl twelve years old in the primary grade,—small geography, small grammar, Fourth Reader, Virginia history, hygiene, or any kind of books used in the third or fourth grade. We are not able to buy sufficient books. My little girl five years old would like Mother Goose Rhymes or an A B C book. Our school begins in October. Any kind of reading would be appreciated, as I haven't received any for some time. Mrs. C. W. Foley, R. F. D. 1, Elamsville, Virginia.

11. Miss Addie Eanes, Bassett, Virginia, will appreciate a book on crocheting.

12. I am truly thankful for all the Cheerful Letter has sent me. I should appreciate a dictionary very much, and a few copies of *The Cheerful Letter* after they have been read. Cassie Rhodes, Hiwassee, Virginia, Route 1.

13. I wish to thank you all for your kindness in the past and ask you to remember me and my band at Christmas. Please help me to bring some cheer to the children and old folks, who have so few pleasures and are glad to get even old picture post-cards. Crops are short and the price of everything so high, times are indeed hard with us all. My girl Bessie, who has been sick so long, is still not strong. Any reading or anything to cheer her will be gratefully received. She likes to do fancy work, so odds and ends any one may have will be most welcome. Mrs. J. Porter, Doerun, Georgia.

14. I wish through this paper to thank the lady for sending me the *Ladies' Home*

Journal. I like to read it so much. I can't get out much this fall and I get very lonesome sometimes. My little boy Lewis is going to school now, and he would love to get some story-books and cards. He is seven years old. I have a baby girl five months old, so I can't get out very much. My mother is with me, too. She was seventy-three years old the 27th of September. My sister died in April and left three little children: a boy aged twelve, named Carl Snapp (address, Vinton, Virginia); Mary, five; and the youngest, Robert, aged one year. Now would some one send them some reading and picture-books? Carl is very fond of reading; he is in the sixth grade at school. They are very lonely and would appreciate anything you would send. I have read "Pollyanna" by Eleanor H. Porter and I should certainly love to have "Pollyanna Grown Up" or any books by this author. Mrs. A. P. Boyd, Vinton, Virginia.

15. It has been some time since I wrote to our little paper, but I have enjoyed it and wish to thank the good friends who sent me reading. I lost all their addresses when I moved from the farm. We are now living in Athens; it is a small town. I should like to hear from some of the friends again, and would appreciate scraps and reading. I get lonely away from all my old friends, and in bad health, too. I shall be glad if some one will send me the *Mothers' Magazine;* it has so many helpful hints in it for us young mothers. Address Mrs. Ella Simmons, P. O. Box 622, Athens, Texas.

16. Mrs. A. P. Boyd gave me a copy of *The Cheerful Letter* and I enjoyed reading it very much. My husband is not able to work all the time and I find it very hard to get along. I am very fond of reading, but can't afford to buy reading matter. Now if some one would send me some books, magazines, or anything to read I should be so glad. I have four children, the oldest twelve years old. I would love for some one to send him a Bible. He is fond of reading; some story-books for the others, also. Some quilt pieces would be very much appreciated, as I can't get out much and I love to make quilts. Thanking you all, I am Mrs. Nannie West, Vinton, Virginia.

17. I have just been reading the September number of *The Cheerful Letter* and like it very much. I should be thankful if some one would send it to me when through with it. My sister Janie Nolen would be pleased to get "The Cricket on the Hearth" and "Tales from Shakespeare" and will pass them on for others to read. I shall appreciate also scraps for patchwork, and any kind of reading suitable for a girl thirteen years old. Irene Nolen, Elamsville, Virginia.

18. Mrs. J. N. Lovin, Rockingham, North Carolina, Route 3, Box 35, asks for *Ladies' Home Journal, McCall's Magazine,* and Longfellow's and Tennyson's Poems.

19. Mrs. Alice Cary Anderson, Mocksville, North Carolina, Route 5, Box 26, will be grateful for "Heir of Redclyffe," "Daisy Chain," "Guardian Angel," or "Wee Macgreegor."

20. *World's Work* is asked for by Mrs. Elva Robinson, Marion, Virginia.

21. Please send me some books that would be helpful in the preparation and delivery of sermons. Rev. D. J. Bryant, Floyd, Virginia.

22. I am all alone. Will you please send me some books again? I should like *Woman's Home Companion* after it is read each month; also directions for crochet, as I like to crochet. Thank you for all. Mrs. M. Bates, 1409 Des Moines St., Des Moines, Iowa.

23. I will ask the members of the Cheerful Letter club to send me some scraps for patchwork, as I should appreciate them. I should also like to have a song-book, and "The Squire's Daughter" or any books that can be sent. Mrs. Annie Simpson, R. F. D. 5, Farmville, Virginia.

24. It has been a long while since we heard from any of our Cheerful Letter friends. I hope they have not forgotten us but will remember us in the near future, as we live in a lonely country home. Any kind of good reading suitable for girls aged ten and fourteen years will be gladly accepted. Also, pieces for patchwork—

gingham, percale, or silk—would be greatly appreciated. Will some one please send us back numbers of *The Cheerful Letter* for 1919? Mary and Winifred Trevey, Snowden, Amherst County, Virginia.

25. I am a little girl ten years old and live in a very lonesome country home two miles from school. I wonder if anybody would send me and my little sister that is seven years old a piece of ribbon? I should be glad of pieces to make a doll-dress, too. We love story-books and pretty post-cards. I should also be glad if some one would send my little brother three years old and my little sister one year old something. Edna Johnson, Pedlar Mills, Virginia.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

Matter for this Department must be omitted this month, because of the unusual number of offers and requests in the Book Club.

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

We have heard countless stories of poor boys who became rich and famous. This is the story of a rich boy who became poor and famous.

The Italian town where he lived seven hundred years and more ago was like the places we read of in fairy tales, a town on a hill, with high walls of stone around it. The streets were narrow, the houses all of stone. Soldiers stood at the town gates keeping guard against the approach of enemies. In those days Italy was not one united nation as it is now; each town was then a sort of independent state, ready to make war at any time against a neighbor town. Assisi itself was a prosperous place, with many rich and important people, and the boy Francis could have anything he wanted; for his father made a great deal of money supplying beautiful woollen stuffs, silks and velvets, furs and embroidered linens, to those who could pay well for such luxuries.

The boy grew up handsome and talented and gay, with troops of friends, for he had plenty of money to spend upon them at feasts and festivals. He was not particular whether his friends amounted to much, or whether they were honest folk, so long as they were gay and amusing.

But when he was in the early twenties something happened which made him look at life in a very different way. He had a long illness and a great deal of time to think, and he began to realize that outside of his own careless good times there was a great deal of wrong-doing and misery in the world. He had a feeling that he was called, personally, to do something about righting the wrongs. His first idea was to become a soldier and fight in the wars, but that did not quite satisfy him; the wars, in fact, were too often to secure wrong ends and unjust advantages. He listened more and more eagerly to a wonderful Voice that seemed to be trying to make him hear a message. Perhaps it was the inward voice of conscience. Perhaps it was the same Voice that Saul of Tarsus had heard on the Damascus road. At all events he did soon hear it quite plainly, telling him to enlist, not in the service of any prince or duke, but as the soldier of Jesus Christ.

That call gave the greatest delight to eager Francis! What did he care about the quarreling Italian nobles, if he could be a soldier and servant of the Lord Himself?

Francis joyfully seized on this promotion, and gave up completely all the silly, selfish extravagances for which he had used to care so much. He knew he had something a thousand times better and more satisfying. The more he prayed and kept his heart open to God's messages, the happier he was and the surer that he had found just the right field for his abounding energies. He had always been eager to do things; now he saw plainly that there was an enormous amount of work that needed to be done, helping other people to understand the real purpose of life and to get free from troublesome evil habits and ways. He saw rich men with ten times as much as they needed, feeling discontented and jealous of each other. He saw poor men struggling so fiercely to get rich in their turn that it made them cruel and hard in success or sour and bitter in failure. And he made it his mission to try to point both kinds of people to the better way of unselfishness and cheerful friendliness with each other.

Francis knew that he himself was vastly happier after he stopped trying to keep up the part of a leader of foolish gayeties. He told his friends he had decided to marry "Lady Poverty"; that meant he had decided to follow as literally as possible the Bible injunction about not worrying over material possessions. He put on a coarse, durable frock of homespun woollen stuff such as peasants wore, using a piece of common rope as a belt, and started out to carry to other people his great discovery that one can get along without any bodily luxuries if one's eyes are open to the beauty of the world and if one's heart is full of love to God and man.

Francis' family thought he must be crazy.

(To be continued.)

NATURAL SCIENCE.

OUR NEIGHBOR OVERHEAD.

Most of our sky neighbors are so far away that our eyes hardly serve for making intimate acquaintance with them, but the moon is, so to speak, a next-door neighbor. Suppose we look at it this month a bit more observantly than usual. On the seventh of December it rises full, and gives a particularly good chance for friendly observation, even though it be almost a quarter of a million (239,000) miles away.

We know that the light coming from that rounding face is reflected sunlight; but we do not always remember that the reflecting surface is by no means smooth and even. It really is extremely uneven, some parts standing out in relief like mountains, some parts deeply hollowed like cups or basins. It takes a telescope or at least a fine field-glass to see moon mountains plainly, but those of us who are fairly far-sighted may notice one spot near the lower edge of the moon's face which seems much brighter than the rest. Look for another similar spot higher up and a little farther to the left. Those are two of the highest peaks on our neighbor globe.

The naked eye can see something else that is fascinating in interest. Everybody has observed the unevenness of the illumination of the full moon's face. It is all "light" in a sense, but some parts are much less light than the rest, giving the effect of darkish blurs or blotches. Those dusky spaces are some of the hollows in the moon's surface,—the dried-up basins of what may once have been lakes and oceans. If we recall the way in which any small round object reflects light to our eyes, we shall see that this slightly darker look of the hollowed places is like what we have always seen in the hollow around the stem of an apple. It is, indeed, the shadow around the base of the apple stem which tells to our eye of the existence of that particular hollow.

How high are the moon mountains? Only an astronomer can calculate that. We are told that many of the lunar peaks and ridges actually stand out farther into space than the highest of our earth mountains. Such heights are calculated by studying the peaks at certain times in the lunar month when the sunlight strikes them sidewise, making them cast their shadows over the moon country at their feet.

It is an interesting test of one's accuracy in observation to draw *from memory* the shapes of the old (or "waning") moon and the new moon, and then, when those phases appear, to compare one's sketches with the facts. A great many people never have noticed the actual curves at different times in the month. Even artists and illustrators, working from memory alone, sometimes make astonishing mistakes!

In December, 1919, the moon's last quarter is due on the 14th. This year, the almanac tells us, we shall have moonless nights at the time of our very shortest days, and only a thin crescent will help celebrate Christmas Eve. But close observation may make sharp eyes able to see the faint, indistinct shape of the rest of the moon's circular outline, both during the last nights of the old moon (about the middle of the month) and during the growth of the new moon, the last week of December. A pretty, old-fashioned name for this last is "the new moon with the old moon in her arms." The reason for our seeing the rest of the round shape is because it gets a little light reflected back to it from the surface of our own world,—just enough to make it faintly visible, though the reflection from our earth is naturally very little compared with the light which one edge (the crescent) is receiving from the sun.

The size of the moon has been calcu

lated quite exactly according to certain mathematical principles. Astronomers find that its diameter is about one-fourth as great as the diameter of the earth; so, according to the scale of proportions in spherical bodies, it is reckoned that the moon's surface area must be about one-fourteenth as large as the earth's surface. Scientific men say it has no veils of air around it, such as are wrapped around our world, so no plants or animals, made on the same plan as ours, could possibly live there. Many astronomers believe it may once have been more like this earth; but if so, it was long ages ago, so far back that imagination cannot follow the possibility. If indeed it ever was a world with people on it, and if they had eyes like ours to see, those people must have looked off through space to our earth here and seen it in their own sky, reflecting a light paler than direct sunshine over their seas and mountains.

Do not keep company with any sin. It may surprise thee as an enemy sometimes, but let it not lodge with thee as a friend. —*Archbishop Leighton.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 1925 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

The initials and finals give two rulers of Spain:—

1. A Russian General. 2. The wife of a French Emperor. 3. A Ruler of Medea. 4. A Ruler of England. 5. A Ruler of Poland. 6. A Roman Emperor. 7. A Ruler of Spain. 8. A Roman Emperor. 9. A Ruler of Babylon.

—*Our Boys and Girls.*

II.

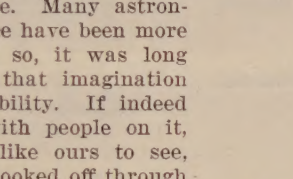
CHARACTERISTIC INITIALS.

1. Arthur's Troubadour.
2. Alfred's Admirer.
3. Rustic Bard.
4. Explains Asia.
5. Describes Avernus.

—*Exchange.*

III.

PUZZLE.



Connect the nine dots by four straight lines, no line to pass through any one dot twice.

IV.

ENIGMA.

I am composed of 29 letters.

My 6, 23, 2, 7, is a boy's name.

My 13, 3, 19, 20, 22, 1, is when a horse runs fast.

My 17, 8, 11, is not dry.

My 12, 9, 21, is a covering for the head.

My 26, 28, 29, is a place of privacy.

My 4, 24, 27, 5, is a form of the verb come.

My 25, 18, 16, is to do away with.

My 10, 14, 15, 27, is part of a house.

My *whole* is a well-known saying.

—*The Beacon.*

I wish to state that No. 3 of this month's list of puzzles is not original; its origin is unknown to the editor.

Answers to puzzles in the November number.

I. TWISTED NAMES OF SHAKESPERIAN PLAYS: 1. Coriolanus. 2. Julius Cæsar. 3. Hamlet. 4. Macbeth. 5. As You Like It. 6. Twelfth Night. 7. King Lear. 8. Othello. 9. The Tempest. 10. King John.

II. ENIGMA: United States of America.

III. CROSS-WORD ENIGMA: King Albert.

IV. TWISTED THANKSGIVING DINNER: Turkey, potatoes, nuts, fruit, pie, ice-cream, carrots, apples, coffee, frozen pudding, soup, celery.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

Chairman of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

Secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Mrs. Francis Hastings, Kendal Green, Mass.

Editor of The Cheerful Letter, Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 5 Brimmer Street, Boston, Mass.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of *The Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

In sending subscriptions for *The Cheerful Letter*, address The Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Subscriptions, 50 cents a year.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

OFFERS.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

REQUESTS.

THE ATTENTION OF READERS IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

CIRCULATING LIBRARIES.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

Apply to Miss Helen L. Wells, 269 Franklin Street, Newton, Mass.

STUDIES AT HOME.

The Home Study Committee of the Cheerful Letter Exchange is planning for more efficient work.

Let it be understood that there are no special courses; the instruction is given by volunteers.

Our aim is to help in subjects in which one is deficient; to help one fit himself for a higher grade of work.

We have books used in the schools here, which can be used for supplementary work in the schoolroom or in the home.

Make all applications to the Home Study Work, Mrs. Elmer E. Hudson, 5 Alveston Street, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

MUSIC.

The music sent out by this department has in the past given much pleasure; and, now that there is more and more interest in "community singing" the calls for help may naturally be expected to be greater.

Offers and requests should be sent to Mrs. Thomas Lacey, 35 East 30th Street, New York City, or to All Souls Church, Fourth Avenue and 20th Street, New York City.